

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 239470
ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 AID-05 /071 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/AND/B - MR. TOYRYLA:LEE
APPROVED BY ARA/AND - MR. BARNEBEY
ARA - GLISTER

-----048467 050250Z /64

P 050121Z OCT 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 239470

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, BL

SUBJECT: WOLA HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON BOLIVIA

1. A REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN BOLIVIA HAS BEEN ISSUED BY THE WASHINGTON OFFICE ON LATIN AMERICA (WOLA). WOLA IS BELIEVED TO BE SUPPORTED, AT LEAST IN PART, BY US RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING IN BOLIVIA. OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS WOLA HAS DEVOTED INCREASING ATTENTION TO BOLIVIA AND VARIOUS REPORTS IT HAS PRODUCED HAVE BEEN CRITICAL. THE REPORTS ARE DISTRIBUTED TO PRIVATE CITIZENS AND ORGANIZATIONS, VARIOUS USG OFFICES, AND CONGRESSMEN.

2. IMPORTANT SECTIONS OF THE MOST RECENT REPORT, WHICH IS A SYNOPSIS OF SEVERAL OTHER LONGER ONES, ARE REPRODUCED BELOW. THE DEPARTMENT REQUESTS EMBASSY COMMENT ON THE ACCUSATIONS AND INNUENDOS CONTAINED IN THE REPORT, WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO FIGURES. VERY BRIEF STATEMENTS KEYED TO THE PARAGRAPHS OF THE REPORT WILL BE SUFFICIENT.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 239470

A RESPONSE PRIOR TO THE OCTOBER 12 HUMPHREY SUB-COMMITTEE HEARINGS WOULD BE USEFUL.

3. QUOTE: BOLIVIA REMAINS VIRTUALLY UNNOTICED IN THE MIDST OF THE MOUNTING CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. THIS IS INTOLERABLE IN LIGHT OF ITS DEPLORABLE HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD.

SINCE 1971 OVER 6,000 PERSONS HAVE BEEN EXILED OR FORCED TO FLEE THE COUNTRY; WELL OVER 2,000 PERSONS HAVE BEEN IMPRISONED FOR POLITICAL REASONS AND AT LEAST 20 POLITICAL PRISONERS HAVE BEEN MURDERED BY THE SECURITY FORCES. NOT ONE POLITICAL PRISONER HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO TRIAL SINCE NOVEMBER 1974 AND SOME 150 POLITICAL PRISONERS REMAIN IN JAIL TODAY.

4. IN FULL KNOWLEDGE OF THESE FACTS AND OTHERS THE STATE DEPARTMENT REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES POINTS TO SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN THE AREA OF HUMAN RIGHTS SINCE GENERAL HUGO BANZER OVERTHREW THE POPULIST GOVERNMENT OF JUAN JOSE TORRES IN 1971. THIS REPORT GROSSLY MISREPRESENTS THE BOLIVIAN SITUATION WHEN IT ALLEGES THAT "MOST BOLIVIANS ENJOY AN ORDERLY AND PEACEFUL SOCIETY AND ARE NORMALLY SECURE FROM ABUSES."

5. ALL OPPOSITION TO GOVERNMENT POLICY IS SILENCED BY A STRONG AND SYSTEMATIC REPRESSION. GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES CAN DETAIN INDEFINITELY AND INVESTIGATE WITHOUT LEGAL RESTRICTIONS ALL OFFENSES AGAINST THE "PUBLIC ORDER" AND THE "SECURITY OF THE STATE." AS OF NOVEMBER 9, 1974 ALL POLITICAL PARTIES, TRADE UNIONS, AND STUDENT AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS HAVE BEEN BANNED. AN OBLIGATORY CIVIL SERVICE COMMANDS ANY BOLIVIAN OVER THE AGE OF 21 TO SERVE THE STATE FOR AN UNDETERMINED PERIOD OF TIME. TRA-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 239470

VELLING IS RESTRICTED, MAIL IS CENSURED AND HOUSES ARE CONTINUOUSLY RAIDED AND THE PERSONAL BELONGINGS OF OCCUPANTS CONFISCATED BY SECURITY FORCES.

6. ALL UNIVERSITIES WERE CLOSED DOWN FOR OVER A YEAR DURING 1971 AND 1972 AND HIGH SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES HAVE BEEN SHUT DOWN INTERMITTENTLY SINCE THEN. STUDENTS AND FACULTY MEMBERS ARE CONSTANTLY SUBJECT TO ARREST, EXPULSION AND HARASSMENT FOR THEIR TEACHINGS AND BELIEFS.

7. "FREEDOM OF THE PRESS" HAS BEEN MADE A MOCKERY OF BY THE EXILING OF IMPRISONMENT OF 194 JOURNALISTS AND THE RANSACKING AND FORCED CLOSING OF MANY RADIO STATIONS. A NATIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO MORE SYSTEMATICALLY CONTROL COMMUNICATIONS. AS OF OCTOBER 1976 THE HIGH COMMAND OF THE ARMED FORCES HAS PROHIBITED THE PUBLICATION OF ALL ARTICLES AND COMMENTARIES CRITICAL OF STATE DIGNITARIES AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

8. THE UNITED STATES COMPTROLLER GENERAL'S REPORT TO CONGRESS OF JANUARY 30, 1975, BOLIVIA, AN ASSESSMENT OF US POLICIES AND PROGRAMS, ILLUMINATES THE UNDERLYING

OBJECTIVES OF US POLICY TOWARD BOLIVIA OVER THE PAST
DECADE:

9. THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE IN BOLIVIA IS THE MAINTENANCE OF POLITICAL STABILITY...THE OVANDO -- TORRES GOVERNMENTS, SEPTEMBER 1969 TO AUGUST 1971, THREATENED TO UNDERMINE THE STABILITY IN BOLIVIA AND THE SURROUNDING AREA.... NO US DEVELOPMENT LOANS WERE AUTHORIZED DURING FISCAL YEARS 1970 AND 1971 AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE WAS SUSPENDED.... THE AUGUST 1971 REVOLUTION THAT OVERTHREW THE TORRES GOVERNMENT BROUGHT ABOUT A COMPLETE REVERSAL IN THE LEFTIST POLITICAL DIRECTION BOLIVIA WAS TAKING.... IN SUPPORT OF THE BANZER GOVERNMENT, THE UNITED
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 239470

STATES HAS PROVIDED APPROXIMATELY 150 MILLION IN ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE. TODAY, ALTHOUGH BOLIVIA STILL FACES MANY POLITICAL PROBLEMS, ITS ATMOSPHERE IS ONE OF RELATIVE PEACE AND GREATER POLITICAL STABILITY.

10. THE FACTS ARE THAT THE COUNTRY OF BOLIVIA IS EXPERIENCING RAPID ECONOMIC GROWTH IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF "STABILITY" WHICH IS BOUGHT AT THE EXPENSE OF THE CONSTITUTIONALLY MANDATED AND UNIVERSALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE MAJORITY OF THE BOLIVIAN PEOPLES. THE ANNUAL GNP RATE OF GROWTH OF BETWEEN 6 AND 7 PER CENT IS UNDERPINNED BY AN AUSTERITY PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND A CONSERVATIVE FISCAL POLICY WHICH HAS LEFT THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE IMPOVERISHED.

11. IN 1977, THE REAL SALARY OF THE WORKERS IS 25 LOWER THAN IN 1971. WORKERS AND PEASANTS HAVE PROTESTED THESE POLICIES AND PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES. THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE VARIES FROM TURNING A DEAF EAR TO CALLING OUT THE MILITARY AND PROMULGATING DECREES WHICH FURTHER RESTRICT THE PUBLIC'S FREEDOM.

12. FOR EXAMPLE, IN JANUARY OF 1974 THE GOVERNMENT REGULATED PRICES OF BASIC NECESSITIES WERE GREATLY INCREASED WHILE THE PRICES OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN THE COCHABAMBA VALLEY REMAINED FROZEN. COCHABAMBA PEASANTS PROTESTED THESE INCREASES WHICH THREATENED THEIR SURVIVAL AND MILITARY ACTION LEFT 100 DEAD AND HUNDREDS MORE WOUNDED AND/OR IMPRISONED. IN 1976 THE MINERS STRUCK FOR AN INCREASE IN WAGES WHICH HAD BEEN FROZEN SINCE 1972 AT APPROXIMATELY US\$1.50 PER DAY. THE MILITARY OCCUPIED THE MINES AND IN ADDITION TO THE IMPRISONMENT AND CONVICTION OF NUMEROUS MINERS AND THEIR FAMILIES, 25 MINING LEADERS WERE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 STATE 239470

DEPORTED TO CHILE ALONG WITH 23 OTHER LEADERS WHO HAD BEEN ARRESTED PREVIOUSLY.

13. THOUGH IT RECEIVES LITTLE ATTENTION IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS ARENA, BOLIVIA IS RECEIVING INCREASING ATTENTION IN THE ECONOMIC ARENA. IN 1975 DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN PRIVATE INVESTMENT ESCALATED BY SOME 33 . FINANCING FROM MULTILATERAL AGENCIES WAS US\$160 MILLION FOR 1976.

14. BOLIVIA RECEIVES MORE ASSISTANCE FROM THE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAN ANY OTHER SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRY. FOR FY 1977 US AID AND PL 480 ASSISTANCE TOTALLED US\$31 MILLION. US SECURITY ASSISTANCE AND RELATED TRANSACTIONS AMOUNTED TO US\$21 MILLION.

15. BOLIVIA HAS THE LOWEST STANDARD OF LIVING IN SOUTH AMERICA WITH A PER CAPITA INCOME OF US\$199 FOR ITS SPARSE POPULATION OF 5.8 MILLION INHABITANTS. LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH IS 45 YEARS AND THE INFANT MORTALITY RATE IS 154 PER 1000 BIRTHS. SOME 40 TO 50 OF THE CHILDREN ARE MALNOURISHED -- 15 SEVERELY SO. OVER 60 OF THE POPULATION IS ILLITERATE AND ONLY 45 OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN ATTEND SCHOOL.

16. IT IS TIME THAT THE BANZER GOVERNMENT WAS CALLED TO ACCOUNT FOR THE ABUSE OF THE BOLIVIAN POPULATION -- A POPULATION WHICH HAS NO INPUT INTO THE POLICIES WHICH ARE ENACTED AND ENFORCED BY A MILITARY REGIME WHICH RULES AGAINST THEIR WILL. CHRISTOPHER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 05-Oct-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE239470
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MR. TOYRYLA:LEE
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770362-0712
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771091/aaaaczjc.tel
Line Count: 204
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f1faf236-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1026169
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WOLA HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON BOLIVIA
TAGS: SHUM, BL, WOLA
To: LA PAZ
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f1faf236-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009